

*commence 11*  
*IHC*  
DCI/IC-74- 0987  
5 April 1974

**MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence**

**SUBJECT:                   Coping with the Information Handling Problem**

1. Information handling and communication arrangements comprise the central nervous system of the U.S. intelligence effort. These are at the center of both analytic responsiveness and processing systems, and, of course, are integral to crisis management. All Community elements are involved in some degree with developing and designing information and communications methods needed to do their jobs. In the aggregate, these add to a very high cost item in the Community's total resource commitment. Each of these, looked upon as a set of sub-systems, has its own proper place; some, particularly in the field of communications, are driven by technical change and decisions made altogether outside of the intelligence community. Given the important accent being placed upon crisis management in various NSDMs and upon your own concerns with presentation and the exploration of improved analytic techniques, the IC Staff feels it is timely to consider the Community's information handling systems in a more futuristic context and in consideration of the variables involved including cost, R&D, etc.

2. Your recent appointment of [ ] with responsibility for conducting a survey of information handling and presentation in the Intelligence Community together with possible R&D in this field is an important first step in reflecting your direct concern with this subject. As an indication of CIA thinking in this area, copies have been provided [ ] of comments of the Deputy Directors on a draft IC memorandum of 8 February 1974 on "Coping with the Intelligence Information Handling Problem".

3. The following guidelines are suggested for your use in discussions with [ ] and others. They reflect comments we have received from yourself, the Deputy Directors of CIA, and discussions held among Dr. Hall, General Davidson, General Graham, and the Undersigned on the earlier IC paper.

**SECRET**

4. In support of the decisions which will be required of the DCI, the USIB members, the IRAC, and individual program managers on the matter of communication of intelligence data, information handling systems, and information presentation, it is important that:

- a. The nature, resources involved, current planning for, and expected future progress of existing single agency and Community systems be identified;
- b. The future analytic environment and its data needs be projected insofar as possible;
- c. Planning and development of current and projected systems be influenced so as to ensure an adequate degree of compatibility and system interchange at the lowest reasonable cost to meet the essential needs of all consumers; and
- d. The periodic evaluation of ongoing systems be accomplished and reported upon to the USIB and IRAC.

In scoping the problem, focus should be on what the analyst can and will use in the way of automated data support. There needs to be assurance that innovations will in fact better serve the ultimate consumer of the intelligence output by contributing to improved quality, scope, and timeliness of intelligence products. We need to find new approaches to the way machinery and words (or numbers) can support and supplement the human brain in perceiving and analyzing situations. This goes well beyond the storage and retrieval function and reaches as well into new means of communicating intelligence to consumers.

The USIB/IHC mechanism should serve the Community and:

- a. Provide a focal point for technical knowledge on the characteristics of information systems in operation and in the planning stage;
- b. Ensure compatibility of software between systems to be developed and those already in existence to the extent possible;
- c. Encourage increased use of central files; and
- d. Conduct and encourage others to conduct studies and experiments to investigate new methods and techniques for perceiving, collating, and analyzing diverse information and data.

**SECRET**

25X1 5. In furtherance of [ ] efforts, we would propose to:

25X1 a. Task the USIB Information Handling Committee to provide [ ] the information, studies, and such other support as he may require in pursuit of your instruction.

25X1 b. Request [ ] provide D/DCI/IC with his judgments on the structure and focus of the IHC in general and on any augmentation he feels may be necessary with representatives from other major elements of the Community. Our presumption is that the IHC role should be broader than automatic data processing alone and should include both a communications and a user focus. IHC should also, we feel, be sensitive to presentation forms, etc. insofar as these may be effected by information handling methodologies.

6. We recommend that you:

a. Advise USIB and IRAC of your personal support to this effort and enlist their cooperation;

b. Authorize formation of an Information Systems Advisory Group to be chaired by [ ] and include selective representation of appropriate government agencies and outside consultants. The critical factor here is to make available to the effort a breadth of expertise and ability to provide guidance to future applications of available and anticipated technology; 25X1

c. Authorize the D/DCI/IC and/or [ ] to seek out and employ contract research assistance to work with and through the IHC to the extent feasible on special matters which may be beyond our in-house competence. 25X1

[ ]  
A/D/DCI/IC 25X1

The recommendations contained in paragraph 6 above are approved:

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DCI

Distribution:

O & 1 - Addressee (1 to be returned to ICS)

1 - ER

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25X1

# INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY STAFF SUMMARY

## INTERNAL COORDINATION

Officer	Action	Initials

Action Officer: Title and Signature

Coordination Staff

Phone Number 6238

Subject:

Coping with the  
Information Handling  
Problem

### Summary

#### PURPOSE:

To present IC views of actions which should be taken to improve the Community response to information handling problems.

#### BACKGROUND:

The memorandum opposite is a revision of the 8 February memorandum on which you provided guidance (reflected particularly in paragraph 4. b.) and on which comments were provided by all of the Deputy Directors. These comments and your appointment of Dr. Martin as Special Assistant to you have resulted in considerable change in the thrust of the memorandum.

The revision has been reviewed by the A/DDS&T who concurs, and by the A/DDI who is still concerned "that we do not push the Director into a position of endorsing some grandiose and extremely expensive programs which, in all probability, would not work." The IC proposal suggests guidance useful, we feel, in coping with the situation and proposes employing existing mechanisms of the USIB and your own office to energize attention to the issues involved. It is not intended to commit you to any particular plan. The A/DDI comments are attached.

#### RECOMMENDED ACTION:

It is recommended you use the memorandum opposite as basis for discussion with [ ] as to the scope of his efforts.

A/D/DCI/IC

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Taken off Daily Journal per

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All other cys to , 16 May 74. \*

No further action, at this time.

\* asked if we should pursue any further with DCI,  
no answer.